

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 TEL AVIV 002511

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/22/2016

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [PGOV](#) [ETTC](#) [KPAL](#) [KWBG](#) [PINS](#) [IR](#) [EG](#) [IS](#) [GOI](#) [EXTERNAL](#) [ISRAELI](#) [PALESTINIAN](#) [AFFAIRS](#)

SUBJECT: MOD'S GILAD ON GAZA, KARNI, AND IRANIAN THREATS IN JORDAN

Classified By: Ambassador Richard H. Jones for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (S) Summary: In a June 21 meeting with the Ambassador, Ministry of Defense Pol-Mil Director Amos Gilad claimed that, during his recent meetings in Jordan, he was told of an Iranian message pressuring Jordan to accept Iranian hegemony in the region. Gilad also reported that he expects strategic control of the Karni crossing to be returned to his office. Gilad emphasized that Israel can no longer tolerate Qassam attacks from Gaza, and that Kerem Shalom was closed in response to a specific security alert. Gilad credited the leadership of Foreign Minister Livni at the MFA and said that, now that she is in charge, perhaps MOD will be able to work with the MFA on sensitive issues relating to defense exports. The Ambassador reminded Gilad that the U.S. is still waiting for an Israeli response on the customs protocol. Gilad agreed to look into the matter, but cautioned that it would be difficult to obtain a firm answer on the protocol before the Security Working Group meeting scheduled for June 30 in Jerusalem. End summary.

-----  
Iranian message  
-----

12. (S) Gilad claimed that during his trip to Jordan two weeks ago "all the Jordanians" were talking about a message received from the Iranians announcing that they are the new superpower in the Middle East, and encouraging Jordan to join the Iranian camp along with Syria and Iraq, which it claimed to dominate. Gilad did not elaborate on the source of the Iranian message. He claimed that it portrayed the Iranians as speaking on behalf of Syrian President Bashar Asad and totally confident of their new position in the region. Gilad also postulated that Iran sees Qatar as the "Achilles heel of the Gulf" and the most likely point of Iranian influence. (Note: Gilad's staff told us after the meeting that, while in Jordan, he met with the prime minister, the King's personal office director, the head of the GID, the foreign minister, the military chief of staff, and the DMI. End note.)

13. (S) Gilad noted that in separate conversations with Egyptian Defense Minister Tantawi in Cairo, the Egyptians had questioned in detail, "for the first time," the impact of various Iranian steps towards becoming a nuclear power. He said that Chief of Egyptian Intelligence Omar Suleiman told him explicitly that Egypt will not tolerate a nuclear Iran. Gilad claimed that he personally is worried that Egypt will act on these fears.

----  
Gaza  
----

14. (C) Gilad told the Ambassador that Israeli intelligence indicates the possibility of an imminent attack (in Israeli terminology a "hot alert") against an unknown target in southern Gaza. Gilad claimed that Hamas is encouraging Palestinian Islamic Jihad and the local brigades to launch attacks against Israel. Gilad said that he had received a call that day from Suleiman asking if Israel is deploying additional forces in the Gaza area. While Gilad did not indicate that he gave Suleiman a definitive answer to the question, he told the Ambassador that the Egyptians are key to ensuring that the situation in Gaza stabilizes quickly. The Ambassador reminded Gilad of the need to keep the focus on political solutions, not only military aims, and noted that the growing number of Palestinian civilian casualties will lead to anger at Israel -- not the Hamas-led PA, and undercut efforts by PA President Abbas and the international community to corner Hamas. Gilad agreed and asked for increased U.S. pressure on President Abbas to bring the situation under control.

-----  
Karni  
-----

15. (C) While not able to provide full details on the alert that caused Kerem Shalom to close, Gilad did mention that the security services had been successful in stopping an attack against Karni last week by "tricking" the attackers. He declined to describe the nature of the attack or the "trick" involved. The Ambassador told Gilad that the USG is

concerned that the U.S.-leased scanners are not being fully utilized at Karni. He noted that lately an average of only 23 containers per day have been leaving Karni when it is open, while more than 40 leave Shar Efriam (a crossing in the northern West Bank). Gilad explained that the Israeli National Police (INP) are currently responsible for actual security at Karni and their determinations decide the flow-through rate. He said that if, based on Shin Bet intelligence, the INP directs the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to conduct deep inspections into all cargo containers passing through a crossing, productivity (as measured in number of containers processed) falls. Gilad went on to describe the competing authorities and overlapping responsibilities of different government agencies at the crossings, but concluded confidently, "at the end of the day, I will be in charge of Karni, at least strategically."

16. (C) The Ambassador told Gilad that U.S. companies are complaining about the management system for Karni, and alleging corruption on both the Israeli and Palestinian sides of the border. Gilad expressed concern about such corruption. The Ambassador described the U.S. idea of creating an on-line database registration system for Karni so that all commercial shippers can see, in a transparent manner, their position in the queue. Gilad agreed that this is a good idea, and that only humanitarian shipments should have priority to jump the queue. The Ambassador suggested as a first step increasing the number of empty containers allowed to come out of Gaza so that international aid organizations do not have to pay high storage and demurrage fees. (In a June 23 meeting MOD consultant BG (ret) Baruch Spiegel told the Ambassador that it was decided on June 22 to resume exports of empty containers on Sunday, June 25.)

-----  
Defense Exports  
-----

17. (C) Commenting on the Ambassador's speech at the Jaffee Institute earlier in the day, Gilad "got the message" on expanding the role of the MFA in improving the defense export system. Gilad claimed that the MOD's previous reluctance to work with the MFA was based on the perception that the MFA is the source of most leaks of highly classified information. He acknowledged that, "maybe it will be different with Tzipi (Foreign Minister Livni) -- she is different." Gilad mentioned former FM Shalom's meeting with the Pakistani FM in Turkey as the kind of "damaging behavior" he expects from the MFA saying, "I only learned about the meeting from the newspaper." Gilad claimed that the meeting caused Indian interlocutors to question Israel's commitment to good relations with India. He added that Pakistan is only interested in meeting Israelis so that they can use Israel to gain favor with the U.S.

-----  
Security Working Group  
-----

18. (S) Gilad reported that Israel has drawn up a list of items for discussion at the June 30th Security Working Group meeting to be chaired by Lt. General Dayton. The list includes:

--PA acceptance/non-acceptance of the security protocol.

--Continued violations of the protocol.

--Procedures for dealing with explosive or dual-use items entering via Rafah.

--Terror elements utilizing the crossings. (Note: Gilad later said that he did not plan to raise this issue at the meeting, but he maintained that he is interested in discussing this point with the USG. End note)

--The importation of cash via Rafah.

--Kerem Shalom as a crossing for non-Palestinian ID holders.

--Extra scanners needed for luggage at Rafah.

--Increased supervision of luggage, including possibly sending real-time images of luggage to the liaison center,

--Decreasing the amount of time for liaison feed to one minute.

--Increasing the presence and influence of Egypt at Rafah.

Gilad said that he will be the Israeli representative at the meeting. He asked that the meeting be held in a "neutral location" such as one of the major hotels.

19. (S) The Ambassador noted that the U.S. is still waiting for an Israeli response to the side letter on the customs protocol, which was negotiated before the Hamas victory in the January Palestinian Legislative Council elections. The

Ambassador emphasized that the PA Presidency signed onto the terms of the agreement (via letter to CG Walles), and that an Israeli letter to the Ambassador to the same effect would enable the EU-BAM mission to exercise more authority in dealing with money laundering at Rafah. Gilad promised to work on a response, but said that it would be unlikely that Israel could commit to signing such a letter in advance of the June 30th Security Working Group meeting.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Visit Embassy Tel Aviv's Classified Website:  
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/telaviv>

You can also access this site through the State Department's Classified SIPRNET website.

\*\*\*\*\*  
JONES